

August 26, 2004

As of January 1, 1994 per OREDS Notice #93-07, the Department of General Services Real Estate Services Division (DGS) began defining "USABLE AREA", "RENTABLE AREA", and "LOAD FACTOR" (RENTABLE/USABLE RATIO), using the definitions created by the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA).

In 1996 BOMA came out with a publication titled "Standard Method for Measuring Floor Area in Office Buildings, which further defined the various terms used for measuring floor area in office buildings.

The current methodology used to calculate square footage by the Department of General Services Real Estate Services Division (DGS), is found in DGS' Standard Lease Form, Exhibit 'B' Outline Specifications: Division 1(E). Measurement of usable square footage is based on calculating the "USABLE AREA" according to the 1996 BOMA publication.

BOMA defines "USABLE AREA" as follows:

USABLE AREA of an OFFICE AREA, STORE AREA or BUILDING COMMON AREA shall be computed by measuring the area enclosed by: the FINISHED SURFACE of the OFFICE side of corridor and other permanent walls; the DOMINANT PORTION or a MAJOR VERTICAL PENETRATION; and the center of partitions that separate the area being measured from adjoining OFFICE AREAS, STORE AREAS and/or BUILDING COMMON AREAS. No deductions shall be made for columns and projections necessary to the building. FLOOR USABLE AREA of a floor shall be equal to the sum of all the USABLE AREAS on the same floor. Where alcoves, recessed entrances or similar deviations from the corridor line are present, USABLE AREA shall be computed as if the deviation were not present.

Exhibit 'B' Outline Specifications Division 1(E) calculates square footage as follows:

Net useable office area includes all areas assigned to the state agency such as: offices, conferences rooms, reception rooms, special use rooms, supply rooms, hallways within the space, laboratories, private restrooms/showers, break rooms, auditoriums, cafeterias and spaces which can **only be used by the state tenant**. Net usable office area does not include stairwells, stacks/shafts, janitor closets, mechanical rooms, electrical rooms, general or required restrooms, dedicated public corridors, and public lobbies. Net useable office area is measured from the finished surface of the office side of the corridor and other permanent walls, the dominant portion of exterior walls, and from the centerline of demising walls separating other offices.

Specification to the BOMA definition of "USABLE AREA" in Division 1 (E) is as follows:

- "DOMINANT PORTION" is clarified to mean the "DOMINANT PORTION" of **exterior walls**, whereas the term "DOMINANT PORTION" by BOMA is defined to mean the portion of the inside FINISHED SURFACE of the *permanent outer building wall* which is 50% or more of the vertical floor-to-ceiling dimension, at the given point being measured as one moves horizontally along the wall.

The essential difference between the two definitions of USABLE AREA is none.

For further information, please refer to the complete 1996 BOMA publication which can be purchased on the web at www.boma.org